

REMARKS

Claims 1-36 are pending in this application. All of the pending claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Sistanizadeh. Claims 1, 12, 24 and 31 are currently amended. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The presently claimed invention as amended distinguish Sistanizadeh because an optical service server is used in conjunction with an optical service agent to provide the services in a manner which shields network topological information from the user. Carriers generally regard information about their network topology to be sensitive and proprietary. Sistanizadeh teaches a service level manager stores network topology information for providing service level management.¹ The service level manager includes a user interface for providing information to users.² Specifically, the user interface is accessible by end-use customers.³ Because the user interface is accessible by end-use customers, the carrier's network topology information is exposed to the customer. In contrast, in the presently claimed invention the network topology information is not exposed to the customer. This can be accomplished, just for example, by the technique described in the specification at page 22, lines 6-12, which supports the claim amendments. Claim 1 therefore distinguishes Sistanizadeh by reciting "an optical service server operative to authenticate the user, obtain network topological information, and to employ the network topological information on behalf of the optical service agent for providing bandwidth management services such that the network topological information is not exposed to the user." Claims 12 and 24 recite similar distinguishing limitations. Claim 31 distinguishes Sistanizadeh by reciting "prior to which an optical service server executes the following steps: authenticating the user; obtaining network topological information; and employing the network topological

¹ Col. 2, lines 39-41

² Col. 2, lines 48-50

³ Col. 2, lines 50-52

information on behalf of the optical service agent to provide bandwidth management services such that the network topological information is not exposed to the first network user.” Claims 2-11, 13-23, 25-30, 32-36 are dependent claims which further distinguish the invention, and which are allowable for the same reasons as their respective base claims. Withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-36 is therefore requested.

Should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned, Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-4001 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible. For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date

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